

MANAGING REMOTE EMPLOYEES 101

PROVEN PRACTICES FOR LEADERS

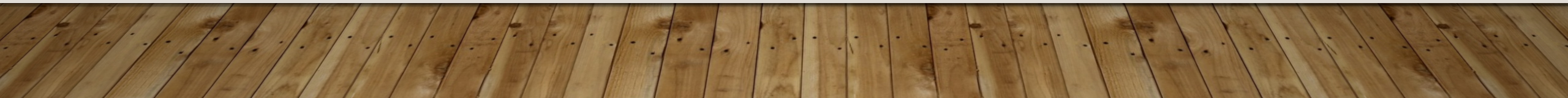
LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Primary: Build competence in managing employees who are suddenly working remotely
- Secondary: Begin to rethink expectations for what it means to be working

SUDDENLY REMOTE

- We have a high-touch culture that is central to our value proposition

What are the things we routinely experience that makes us “high-touch”? (Exercise)

- Most members of our professional community are working remotely for the first time
 - Many of our leaders are also managing remote employees for the first time
 - *We can learn from organizations that operate from multiple locations and therefore have significant experience in working remotely*
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MANAGING REMOTE EMPLOYEES

- Two essential aspects to attend to when managing remote employees
 - 1) Objective – Productivity, Effectiveness, Quality
 - Focusing on results and offering flexibility for how the work is done
 - 2) Affective – Engagement, Connectedness, Emotional stamina
 - Planning for and investing time in an aspect of management that previously happened naturally

MANAGING THE OBJECTIVE FACTORS

In an environment when most day to day management is done face to face, often informally how do we manage performance when people are suddenly remotely?

- Establish a schedule and ground rules
 - Core work hours and availability outside of core hours
 - Frequency and timing of live 1:1 and team check-ins
 - Response time on emails
- Document deliverables and associated timelines
 - Track progress – Excel spreadsheet or a Google doc works well
 - Tune the amount of detail to match the individual's needs and experience

PROJECT PLANNING & MANAGEMENT SPREADSHEET

INITIATIVE/PROJECT NAME	DELIVERABLES/OUTCOMES	TASK DESCRIPTION	TARGET COMPLETION DATE	STATUS (Complete, In Progress, Stuck, Not started)	Notes
Project A	Deliverable 1	Task 1			
	Deliverable 2	Task 2			
		Task 3			
Project B	Deliverable 1	Task 1			
	Deliverable 2	Task 2			
		Task 3			
Project C	Deliverable 1	Task 1			
	Deliverable 2	Task 2			
		Task 3			

COMMUNICATING WITH REMOTE EMPLOYEES

- **Regular live 1:1 check-ins**

- Depending on the individual this might be daily but in every case as least weekly

- **Agree to multiple communication channels**

- Texting is great for exchanges in near real time
- Email works well when a record of the communication is desired and rapid response is not needed. It is the worst mode for resolving contentious issues.
 - Rule of thumb: After two exchanges on email switch to phone or video call
- Phone calls are easy to set up and capture the subtleties of intonation, pacing and the like
- Online team rooms (Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts, etc.)
- Video conferencing provides visual cues and many of the same benefits as face-to-face and is most effective in reducing the sense of isolation

SAMPLE CHECK-IN AGENDA

VIA PHONE OR VIDEO CALL

- **Personal check-in**
 - How are you doing?
 - What challenges are you finding with working remotely? How can I be helpful?
 - What do you enjoy about working remotely?
- **Review deliverables and timelines**
 - What is going well? - Reinforce successes
 - Where are you stuck and can use my assistance?
 - Is there support you need from others that I can help you obtain?

MAINTAINING TEAM SPIRIT AND COHERENCE

TEAM HUDDLE

- **Useful for**
 - All teams – Departmental, Divisional, Functional
- **Design**
 - Focused on the team...NOT operations or issue resolution
 - Separate meeting or a distinctive aspect of an operational meeting (consider at the end)
 - Best with videoconferencing
 - Tips – Arrive early. Use headphones./Mute. Face the light. Be fully present.

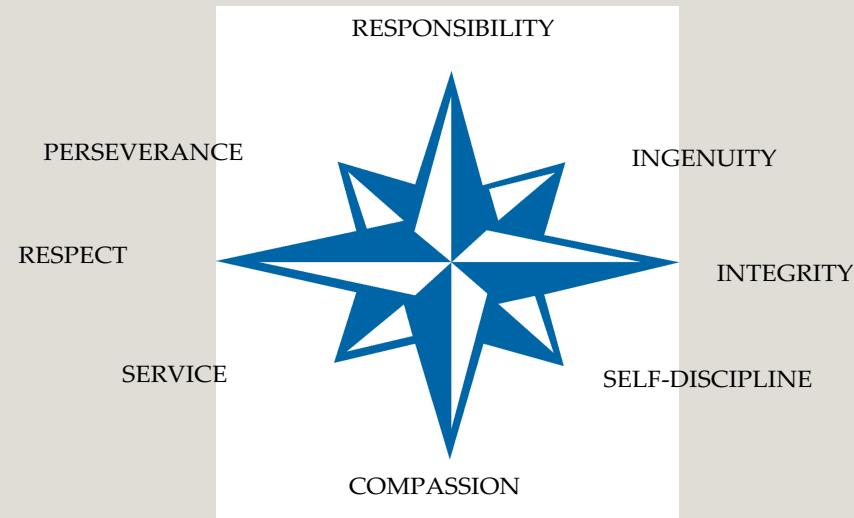
CONDUCTING A TEAM HUDDLE

SAMPLE AGENDA

1. Centering exercise – chime or deep breaths or thankful thoughts

2. Mission moment – Share a story on delivering the mission or living the values

- Mission: The Albany Academies coordinate single-sex and coeducational learning environments to develop diligent students of high character who become curious, critical thinkers.
- Core Values



CONDUCTING A TEAM HUDDLE

SAMPLE AGENDA

3. **How are you?** Individual energy level? Or What I am looking forward to this week?

4. **Recognition** - Virtual high fives

5. **Question of the day** – Have one member come prepared with a question such as;

- How is your home office functioning for you?
- How are you dealing with work/life balance while working from home?
- What is the best movie you have watched?

Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKEtm3HCrsW&t=319>

YOUR PERSPECTIVE

- Setting new expectations
- Successes / Challenges
- Comments & Questions